MARVEL COMICS
MARVEL COMICS PRES.
AN INFINITY WAR CROSSOVER
WOLVERINE
AND
TYPHOID MARY
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$1.50 US
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AUTHORITY
ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
IRON FIST

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS WOLVERINE

Steve Lightle — COVER
Terry Kavanagh — EDITOR
Mark Powers — ASSISTANT EDITOR
Tom DeFalco — EDITOR IN CHIEF

pg.

WOLVERINE/ TYPHOID MARY 1

TYPHOID'S KISS
Part 3 of 8
"OVER EXPOSED"

Logan and Mary Walker must infiltrate a renegade mind-control project to collect evidence of government dirtywork. But, like all double agents, she wonders what's in it for him? And he begins to wonder: what's a sweet girl like her doing mixed up in a world like his...?

Writer — ANN NOCENTI
Artist — STEVE LIGHTLE
Letterer — BILL OAKLEY
Colorist —RENEE WITTERSTAETTER

pg.

IRON FIST 9

"MENACE OF THE MAD ABBOT"

Once, Danny Rand was known as the living weapon, champion of K'un-L'un–Iron Fist! But that was before he was held in a near-death state by the alien H'ylthri. Can he regain his edge...?

Writer — JOEY CAVALIERI
Penciler — ALEX MORRISEY
Inker — BRAD VANCATA
Letterer — STEVE DUTRO
Colorist — BRAD VANCATA

MARVEL ® COMICS PRESENTS™ Vol. 1, No. 111, 1992. (ISSN # 1044-7180) Published by MARVEL COMICS. Terry Stewart, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published biweekly.

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MARVEL READERS PRESENT

c/o Marvel Comics Group
387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016
Attention Correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that info by request!

Dear Terry,

Re: MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #105:

Well, well, well... another fine batch of Sam Kieth covers! My only complaint about this issue's front pieces were the cover blurbs introducing the other features in the book. I think that the blurbs take away some of the covers' artistic value, and I would rather not see them there. Could you at least make them smaller, or perhaps stick them up in the rectangular box at the top left corner of the cover?

Wolverine & Nightcrawler cover: A-.

Ghost Rider & Dr. Strange cover: A-.

This issue's chapter of "Male Bonding," with Wolverine and Nightcrawler, was a better outing than last issue's. The two-page layout where the farm people shed their human skins and revealed the true monsters underneath was truly chilling! And this issue's shock ending was also nice—but why would a circus with freaks of its own want to destroy others like them? Rating: A-.

The Young Gods installment this time around was also an improvement. I'm finding that, with each passing chapter, I come to enjoy Tom Sutton's pencils more and more. Rating: B+.

FLIP!

The Ghost Rider & Dr. Strange feature was my least favorite this week, but it wasn't all bad. Gorn's true intent is finally revealed, and we see his role in the storyline (which is not what I had expected at all!). Rating: B+.

Hmm... I'm seeing a pattern here. During the last few months, the best features each issue have been the one-parters. This issue's Thing feature was no exception. Skip Dietz crafted a finely entertaining story showing the true aspects of a good hero. The Vigil of Vontsalvant was an interesting character; perhaps he could have his own multi-part feature in this book one day... Rating: A.

Overall rating of MCP #105: (drum roll, please...) A-.

Keep up the good work!

Mike Farmer
8745 Lake Glen Court
Alpharetta, GA 30202

We'll try, Mike—thanks for the high rating! As for the Vigil, we're not really sure that he's ready for a multi-part story yet, but if our plans for him change, we'll keep you informed...

Dear Sirs,

As I've previously stated, I've been very impressed with the current Wolverine/Nightcrawler feature. Of course, being a large fan of Gene Colan's from way back, how could I not? Mr. Lobdell has also done an excellent job with both plot and characterization, and I look forward to future installments with bated breath.

I've also enjoyed the Ghost Rider/Dr. Strange serial very much. After reading this installment, though, I'm unsure about the necessity of a sixth installment, since you would be hard pressed for a better ending.

While I wasn't expecting much from it, I must admit that I was very impressed with the Thing story. While it was far from ground-breaking, it was quite enjoyable, and strongly reminiscent of the FANTASTIC FOUR of the 1970s. Messrs. Dietz, Zulueta and Tuohy are to be commended, and I hope to see more of them in the future.

Marson Fedrick
P.O. Box 514
Ellisville, MS 39437

TYPHOID'S KISS
PART 3
OVER-EXPOSED!
FEATURING
WOLVERINE and TYPHOID MARY
OH, LORD-- LOGAN, NO-- DON'T KILL HIM!
AUGHH!
MY LORD, LOGAN, YOU'VE BROKEN HIS FACE!
YOU KILLED HIM!

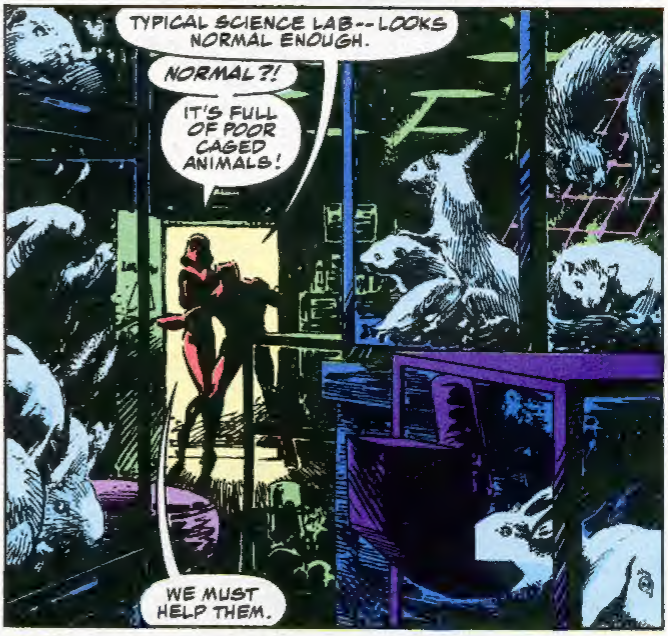
HE AIN'T DEAD.
I NEVER KILL.
IT... FELT... LIKE YOU MURDERED HIM...
I SAID-- I DON'T KILL.
OH...

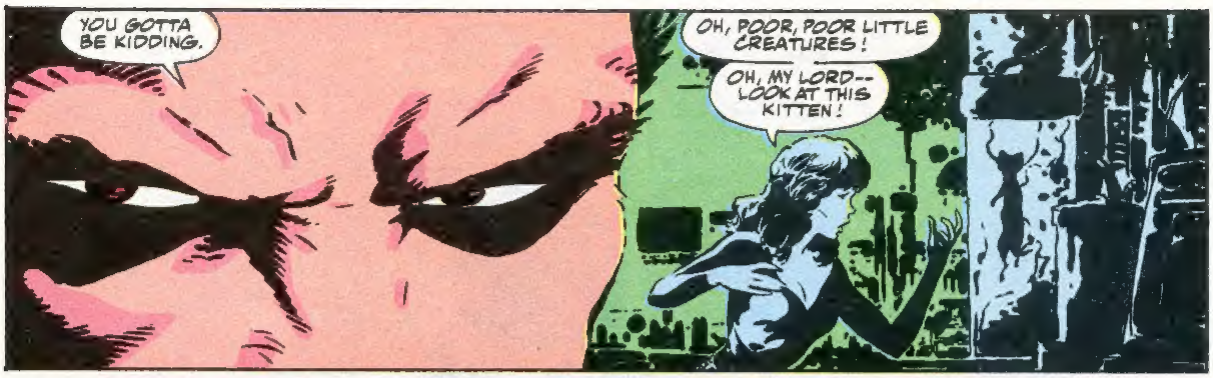
WELL, YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT THIS LAB-- THIS GUARD MEANS THEY GOT LOTS TO HIDE.
AND ACCORDING TO YOUR MAP, THE VAULT'S IN THAT A-LAB.

LET'S MOVE IT.
BUT... HE'S HURT...

LISTEN, MARY-- I'M REAL SORRY YOU HAD TO SEE ME DECK THAT GUY.
LABORATORY A
I'D LIKE TO PROTECT YOU FROM SUCH VIOLENCE.

BUT I MUST ADMIT--
--I KINDA THOUGHT YOU WERE USED TO IT.
C'MON, KID. WE GOT WORK TO DO.


TYPICAL SCIENCE LAB-- LOOKS NORMAL ENOUGH.
NORMAL?!
IT'S FULL OF POOR CAGED ANIMALS!
WE MUST HELP THEM.


YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING.
OH, POOR, POOR LITTLE CREATURES!
OH, MY LORD-- LOOK AT THIS KITTEN!

POOR HURT KITTY.
WE MUST LIBERATE THEM!
CRIPES, DON'T START YAKKIN' OUT THAT ANIMAL RIGHTS BUNK!
BELIEVE ME, I GOT A SYMPATICO WITH THE WILD ANIMALS OF THE WORLD--
--BUT THOSE RIGHTS FANATICS PROTEST THESE LABS EVEN WHILE THEY TAKE ASPIRIN AND EVERY OTHER DRUG TESTED HERE SO THEY CAN BE MADE SAFE FOR THEM!

HYPOCRITES!
LIKE I ALWAYS SAY-- EVERYBODY'S GOT A LITTLE BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS!
TAP TAP

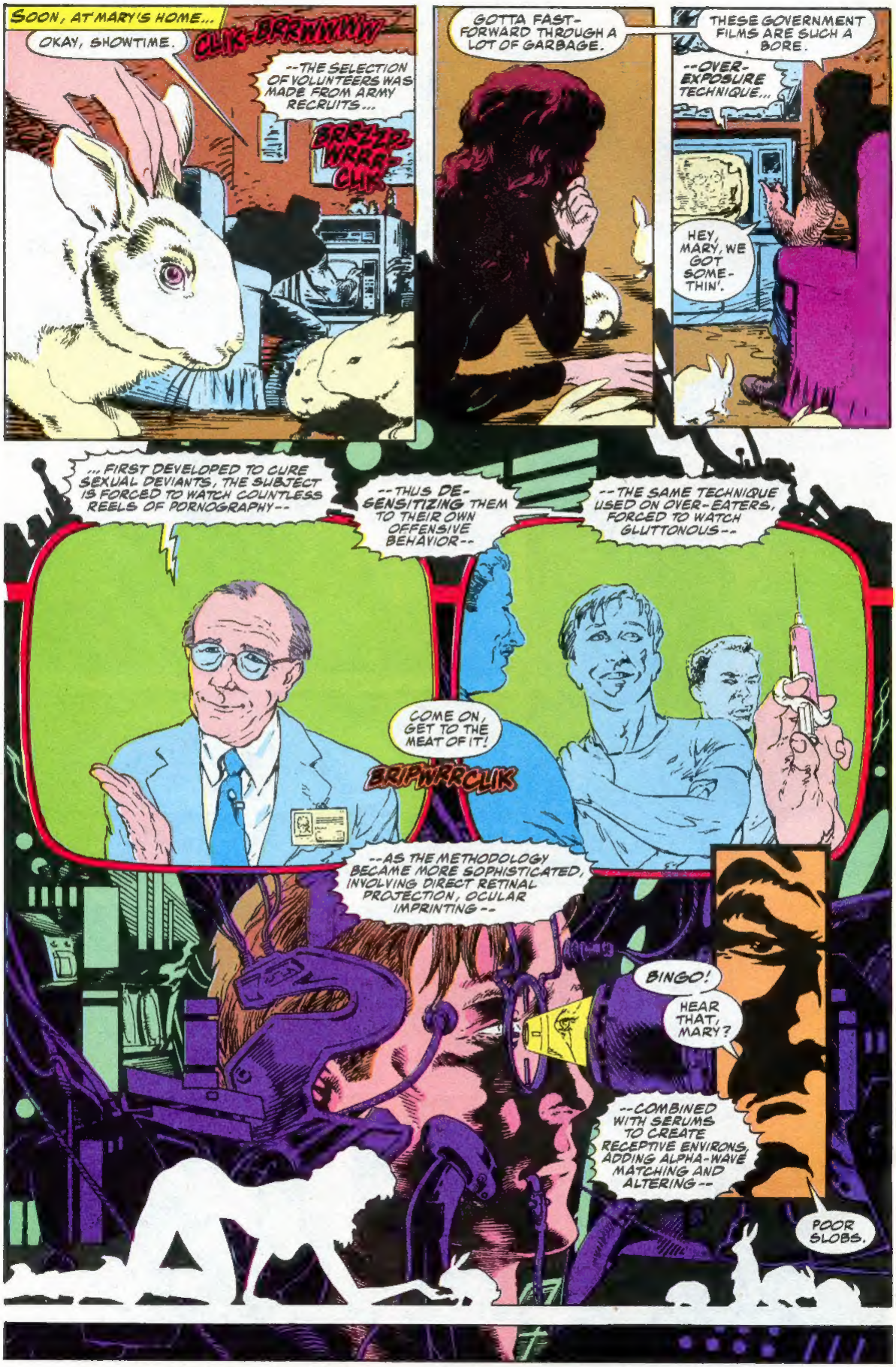
SNIKT
SNIKT

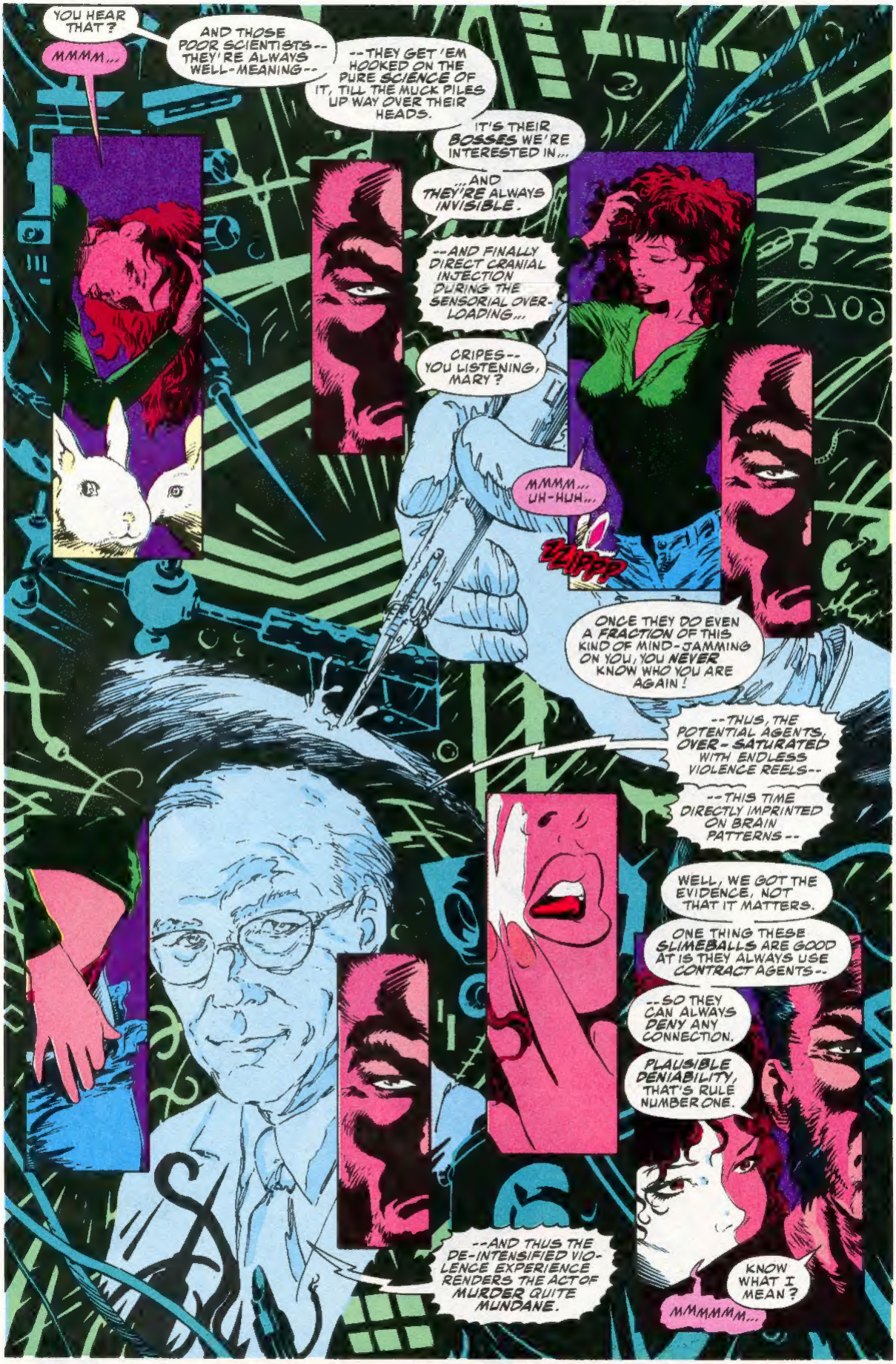
SCREEF
SKREEK

WELL, WELL... WE HIT THE JACKPOT.
OH! POOR TINY BUNNIES STUCK FULL OF WIRES!
COME HERE, BABY.
NOBODY'S GONNA HURT YOU.

THE GOOD OL' PROJECT.
YOUR INFORMATION WAS QUITE ACCURATE.
THE PROJECT

THAT'S NICE.
HELLO, SWEET BUNNY.
AREN'T THEY DARLING?
I'M GOING TO TAKE THEM ALL HOME!


SOON, AT MARY'S HOME...
OKAY, SHOWTIME.
CLIK-BRRWYYYYY
--THE SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS WAS MADE FROM ARMY RECRUITS...
BRRZZT-WRRR-CLIK
GOTTA FAST-FORWARD THROUGH A LOT OF GARBAGE.
THESE GOVERNMENT FILMS ARE SUCH A BORE.
--OVER-EXPOSURE TECHNIQUE...
HEY, MARY, WE GOT SOME-THIN'.
... FIRST DEVELOPED TO CURE SEXUAL DEVIANTS, THE SUBJECT IS FORCED TO WATCH COUNTLESS REELS OF PORNOGRAPHY--
--THUS DE-SENSITIZING THEM TO THEIR OWN OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOR--
--THE SAME TECHNIQUE USED ON OVER-EATERS, FORCED TO WATCH GLUTTONOUS--
COME ON, GET TO THE MEAT OF IT!
BRIPWRRCLIK
--AS THE METHODOLOGY BECAME MORE SOPHISTICATED, INVOLVING DIRECT RETINAL PROJECTION, OCULAR IMPRINTING--
BINGO!
HEAR THAT, MARY?
--COMBINED WITH SERUMS TO CREATE RECEPTIVE ENVIRONS, ADDING ALPHA-WAVE MATCHING AND ALTERING--
POOR SLOBS.


YOU HEAR THAT?
MMMM...
AND THOSE POOR SCIENTISTS-- THEY'RE ALWAYS WELL-MEANING--
--THEY GET 'EM HOOKED ON THE PURE SCIENCE OF IT, TILL THE MUCK PILES UP WAY OVER THEIR HEADS.
IT'S THEIR BOSSES WE'RE INTERESTED IN...
...AND THEY'RE ALWAYS INVISIBLE.
--AND FINALLY DIRECT CRANIAL INJECTION DURING THE SENSORIAL OVER-LOADING...
CRIPES-- YOU LISTENING, MARY?
MMMM... UH-HUH...
ZZIPPP
ONCE THEY DO EVEN A FRACTION OF THIS KIND OF MIND-JAMMING ON YOU, YOU NEVER KNOW WHO YOU ARE AGAIN!
--THUS, THE POTENTIAL AGENTS, OVER-SATURATED WITH ENDLESS VIOLENCE REELS--
--THIS TIME DIRECTLY IMPRINTED ON BRAIN PATTERNS--
WELL, WE GOT THE EVIDENCE, NOT THAT IT MATTERS.
ONE THING THESE SLIMEBALLS ARE GOOD AT IS THEY ALWAYS USE CONTRACT AGENTS--
--SO THEY CAN ALWAYS DENY ANY CONNECTION.
PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY, THAT'S RULE NUMBER ONE.
--AND THUS THE DE-INTENSIFIED VIOLENCE EXPERIENCE RENDERS THE ACT OF MURDER QUITE MUNDANE.
KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
MMMMMM...

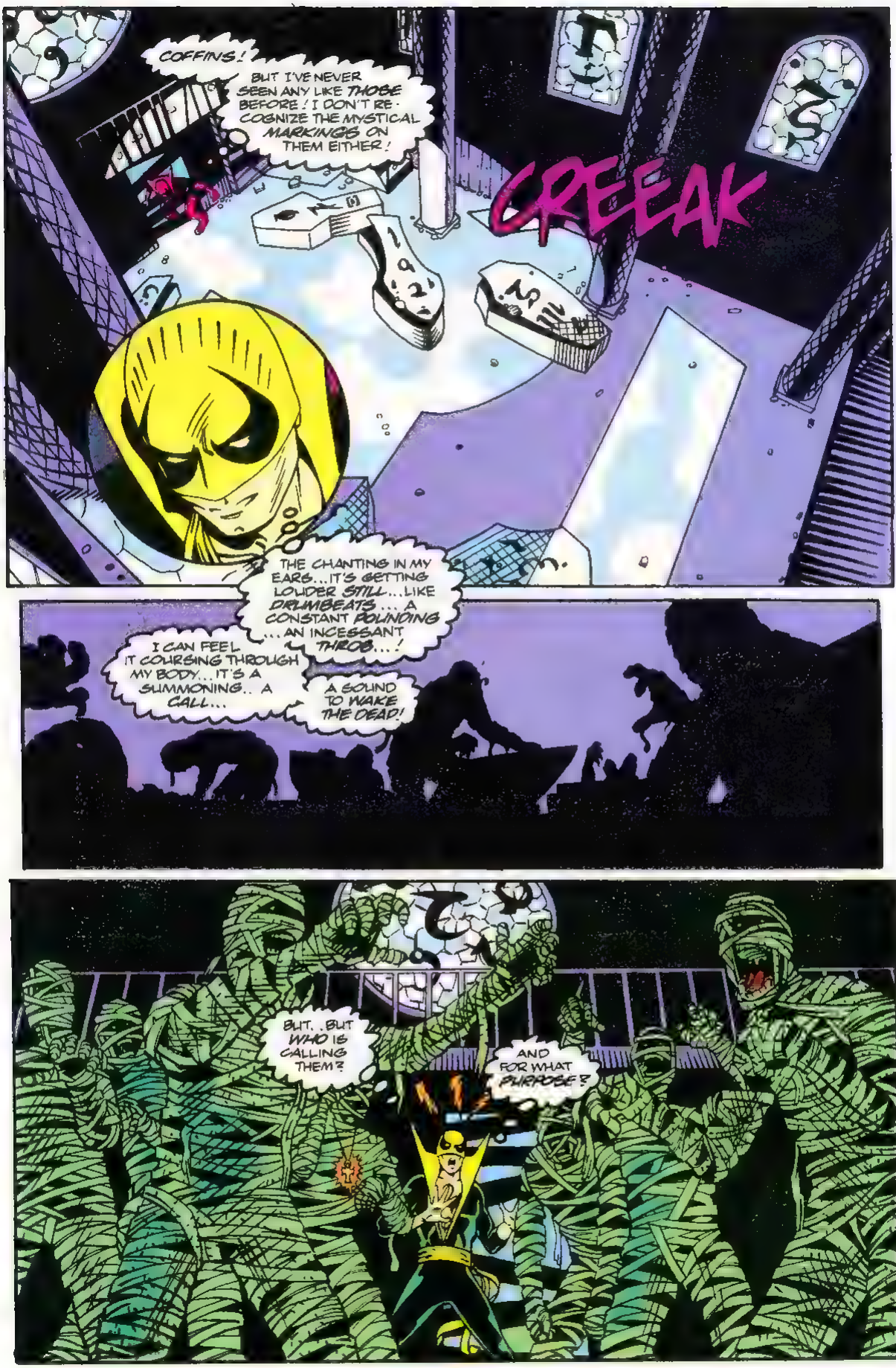
IT'S ALL SO... FASCINATING.
BUT...
ENOUGH WORK, BABY--
--WANNA PLAY?
JEEZ-- CRIPES, WHAT THE HECK?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE-- UGHMM!
GET YOUR HANDS OFFA ME!

WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?!
WHERE'S MARY?
YOU IDIOT.
I AM MARY-- TYPHOID MARY!
THAT FAWNING LITTLE CON-ARTIST PRETENDING TO BE A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF THE FEMALE RACE--UGH! HOW I HATE HER!
HOW'D SHE SEDUCE YOU?
WITH THAT FALSE VIRGINITY AND BLUSHING PURITY?
TELLIN' YOU SHE LOVED KITTENS AND WHITE LACE?
YOU KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE SHE'S KILLED, LET ALONE HOW MANY SHE'S--
MARY! STOP THIS! THROW THIS CREATURE OUT OF YOUR MIND!
SHE CAN'T CONTROL YOU!
OOOOH, BABY, POP THOSE CLAWS!
GO, AHEAD, MY LITTLE WILD MAN--
--USE 'EM!
YOU SUCKER!
THE TRAUMA OF HER SEEING THOSE FILMS THREW HER RIGHT OUT OF HER BRAIN!
BUT SHE SURE HOOKED YOU WHERE YOU LIVE AND YANKED YOU ALONG!
EVEN NOW YOU CAN'T RESIST KISSING LITTLE CHASTE MARY!
STZZZZZZSSSS

ARAA!
YOU SET ME ON FIRE!
SO YOU'VE GOT POWERS TOO!
MARY! LISTEN TO ME!!
THROW HER OUT! IT'S THE PROGRAMMING!
MY, MY. THOSE CLAWS SLICE MIGHTY CLOSE. NO SUBTLE SEDUCTION FOR YOU, EH?
WELL, I DESERVED IT FOR BURNING YOUR CLOTHES OFF.
"WE DON'T NEED PROGRAMMING! WE'RE BORN THIS WAY!
"WE'RE ALL OVER-EXPOSED!
"WE EAT, BUT WE DON'T TASTE!
"WE DESIRE BUT WE'RE NEVER FULL!
"AND YOU AND ME? WE CAN KILL BUT WE CAN'T EVER FEEL!
"OH, LOOK, SOMEONE'S BLEEDING!
"NOW, WOLVERINE, LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS IF I SET YOU AFIRE AGAIN--
"--WILL YOU STRIP OFF YOUR OWN SKIN?"
AAAAAAAAA
"TOOTLES!"
CONTINUES NEXT ISSUE...

IRON FIST IN
MENACE OF THE
MAD ABBOT!
YOUR "BUSINESS" IS TAKING A DOWNTURN.
YOU PREY ON LONE WOMEN BECAUSE YOU EXPECT NO RESISTANCE
NOW THAT SHE HAS A DEFENDER IT'S NOT AS EASY AS YOU THOUGHT, IS IT?
DESHER
NSTRUCTION
ORPORATION
WAIT A MINUTE.. WHAT'S THAT HIGH-PITCHED SOUND?
SOUND? WHAT SOUND?
SHUT UP, IF THE MAN HEARS A SOUND, HE HEARS A SOUND.
OR DO YOU LIKE SPITTIN' UP TEETH?
WHY CAN'T THEY HEAR IT? IT'S COMING FROM BACK THERE PLAIN AS DAY.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT. ANYTHING YOU SAY CAN AND WILL BE USED AGAINST YOU IN A COURT OF LAW...
OWW!
THAT, TOO.
WILL YOU WANT TO TESTIFY, MR. AH... FIST?
I DON'T KNOW WHY NO ONE ELSE NOTICES ANYTHING...
...BUT THAT NOISE IS FILLING MY HEAD, RINGING LOUDER THAN THE TEMPLE BELLS OF LOST KUN L'UN!
THE CLOSER I GET TO THIS OLD CHURCH, THE STRONGER IT BECOMES!
ST. MARK'S
IT'S GROWING CLEARER. IS IT A HUM... OR SOME STRANGE CHANT?
IT'S NOT MERE CURIOSITY THAT COMPELS ME FORWARD..
I FEEL... DRAWN TO THIS PLACE.
I DON'T THINK I COULD TURN AROUND NOW IF I WANTED TO!
THERE IS MAGIC AT WORK WITHIN! DO I DARE MEET IT?
DO I HAVE A CHOICE?


COFFINS!
BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN ANY LIKE THOSE BEFORE! I DON'T RECOGNIZE THE MYSTICAL MARKINGS ON THEM EITHER!
CREEAK
THE CHANTING IN MY EARS...IT'S GETTING LOUDER STILL...LIKE DRUMBEATS... A CONSTANT POUNDING ...AN INCESSANT THROB...!
I CAN FEEL IT COURSING THROUGH MY BODY... IT'S A SUMMONING.. A CALL...
A SOUND TO WAKE THE DEAD!
BUT. . BUT WHO IS CALLING THEM?
AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

YOU SEE? IT IS AS I TOLD YOU! THEY CANNOT RESIST THE SPELLS OF THANADEMOS!
EVEN NOW, AS I PROMISED, YOUR LOVED ONES ARE RETURNING TO YOU FROM THEIR SLEEP!
NO MATTER HOW DEEP THE COMA, IT CAN BE BROKEN BY THE MAGIC I'VE SPENT A LIFETIME MASTERING!
BUT THERE IS A PRICE FOR THEIR CURE...
...THRALLDOM!
THEY RESPOND ONLY TO THE COMMANDS OF THANADEMOS!
I HAVE BUT TO WILL IT... AND SEE HOW EAGERLY THEY APPROACH!
HE'S RIGHT! EVEN I FEEL THE FLOOR MOVING BENEATH MY FEET... AS IF I WAS BEING PULLED TOWARD HIM!
I WAS RECENTLY REVIVED FROM A NEAR DEATH STATE*. NOT UNLIKE THE KIND THANADEMOS DESCRIBES!
AM I SO MUCH LIKE THESE PATHETIC CREATURES ...THAT I'M SUSCEPTIBLE TO HIS MAGIC AS WELL?
* NAMOR #23. -- TERRY

IN ALL MY YEARS AS A SEEKER OF KNOWLEDGE... MY HARD WORK AND STUDY WITH LEI KUNG... THE DEDICATION OF MY ABILITIES TO MORE THAN JUST A QUEST FOR POWER..
IT MUST ADD UP TO SOMETHING MORE! IT MUST!
HOLD! ONE OF THEM IS SLIPPING FROM MY MENTAL GRASP! THAT ONE!
THE ANKH IT WEARS.. IT'S COMPETING WITH MY MAGIC!
THAT IS YOUR BROTHER I HAVE REVIVED, IS IT NOT?
HOW DID HE COME BY THAT MEDALLION?
A MILLION PARDONS, MIGHTY ABBOT!
WHEN MY POOR BROTHER WAS FIRST AFFLICTED WITH SLEEPING SICKNESS, I GAVE HIM THE MEDAL TO PROTECT HIM FROM HARM!
BUT I DID THIS LONG BEFORE JOINING YOUR SECT! LONG BEFORE FINDING THE SOLACE SO MANY OTHERS HAVE IN YOUR POWER!
LONG BEFORE PLACING MY BROTHER IN YOUR SARCOPHAGUS TO PRESERVE HIS SPIRIT!
THE ANKH'S POWER MUST BE GREAT INDEED. FOR EVEN NOW, YOUR LONG-AILING BROTHER DISPLAYS A WILL OF HIS OWN!
GOOD TO KNOW!
SORRY, PAL. YOU CAN LIVE WITHOUT THIS...
...BUT I CAN'T! IF IT WORKED FOR YOU, IT'LL WORK FOR ME!

WHERE DID HE COME FROM? WHO LET HIM IN?
I ASSURE YOU, ABBOT, I HAD NO IDEA--
NEVER MIND, IDIOT! HE MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE! SURROUND HIM! CAPTURE HIM!
BETTER MEN THAN YOU HAVE TRIED TO BRING ME DOWN.
BUT I'M STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE. MORE ALIVE THAN THESE SORRY SPECIMENS, AT ANY RATE
THE ONLY MUMMIES IN MANHATTAN BELONG IN A MUSEUM!
WHOK
GOT TO PULL MY PUNCHES AGAINST THESE LIVING DEAD MEN! THEY'RE ONLY PUPPETS OF THE ABBOT, AFTER ALL!
THOK
CHUKK

IF I GIVE YOU CREDIT--YOU TAKE A THRASHING BUT KEEP COMING.
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THAT'S YOUR STAMINA... OR THE POWER OF THANADEMOS!
CHAK
CHUFF
SPEAKING OF YOUR BOSS, WHERE DOES HE THINK HE'S GOING?
I WOULDN'T WANT HIM TO MISS ANY OF THIS!
ENOUGH! I CAN SEE THIS IS A LOSING BATTLE! MY DAY WILL COME SOON ENOUGH!
NOW THAT I KNOW THE MAGICKS CONTAINED HEREIN WILL WORK--
--I CAN RAISE MULTITUDES OF THE NEAR-DEAD... FROM SICKBEDS AND HOSPITALS ALL OVER THE CITY! THEY WILL YET BE MINE TO COMMAND.. TO ENSLAVE!
I WILL HAVE AN ARMY AT MY DISPOSAL.
TOME OF
...WHEN I FIGHT AGAIN-- ANOTHER TIME!
NO TIME TO CHASE HIM--
--AND HIS FOLLOWERS WOULDN'T LET ME ANYWAY!
KRAK

ONLY HAVE SECONDS TO USE THE POWER OF THE LIVING WEAPON--
--TO SEVER THESE CHAINS--
GARON
THAT HOLD THE IMMENSE GONG IN PLACE!
WHIRRING
WHIRRING
WHIRRING
WE HEARD THE FIGHT AND FOLLOWED YOU!
IRON FIST .. ARE YOU OKAY?
MARK
I AM.. NOW.
YOU'LL FIND SOME MEN INSIDE WHO WILL NEED PROPER MEDICAL CARE.
THE ANKH.. SYMBOL OF LIFE.
ONCE THE WORLD THOUGHT I WAS DEAD..UNABLE TO MOVE.. BARELY ABLE TO BREATHE.
BUT MY LIFE IS MORE THAN MERE ANIMATION AND BREATH. IT HAS MEANING AND PURPOSE AND IDENTITY. ALL OF THESE ARE WHAT MAKES... IRON FIST.
THE END.

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GHOST RIDER
AND
THE WEREWOLF
ALSO
THANOS
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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
30TH ANNIVERSARY
1962 1992
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

MARVEL READERS PRESENT

c/o Marvel Comics Group
387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

Attention Correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that info by request!

Dear Terry,

Re: MCP #105: Quite an interesting issue...

1) Wolverine/Nightcrawler: Another great chapter. Scott, Gene and Al just never cease to amaze me. I'd like to see these characters meet as soon as possible after "Male Bonding," because they work so well together. Maybe over in EXCALIBUR, Terry... Also, who lettered this chapter? It resembled the lettering in this issue's Ghost Rider/Dr. Strange, but those were credited to Mike Higgins and Janice Chiang, respectively. Neither one of their styles are like this one, though. Needless to say, I hope that this letterer sticks around, because I believe good lettering enhances artwork. (I know you probably think I'm nuts, but a bad letterer can ruin a story for me!) Overall grade: A+.

2) Young Gods: Ah, I wish this story was shortened. Eric Fein and Gerry Conway are writing a good story, but it has the Too Long Syndrome. I believe that some MCP writers try to put too little in too many parts, and that just doesn't work. Everything should get just as much space as it needs, and nothing more. Still, this story isn't bad. The artwork by Sutton and Holdredge is nice, too. Overall grade: B.

3) Ghost Rider/ Dr. Strange: Now, this chapter was good. I don't have the foggiest notion why, but the artwork seems to change with every issue. Yeah, you can tell it's the same people, but it just seems like one issue is sloppy and the next is beautiful. Thankfully, this issue had good artwork, unlike last issue. The story, while not being one of Howard's best works, is interesting. I give "Gorn Revealed" a B+, at least for this chapter.

Thing: Well, well, well. I hate when so much is crammed into eight pages. This story could have been so much better with two or three chapters, with more detail and involvement. It followed the old Plot Revealed–Battle–End formula, and thus disappointed me. Nevertheless, I hope to see Skip Dietz working again. Joel Zulueta's and Tim Tuohy's art were adequate. Maybe you can lure Ron Wilson to do another Thing tale. If I sound really critical, it's because Ben is one of my favorite Marvel characters. The overall grade is somewhere between a C+ and a B.

5) Wolverine/Nightcrawler Cover: A+. Beautiful.

6) Ghost Rider: C'mon, Sam!! C.

Well, I'm sorry, but I expect better. This was one of your few off-issues (with the exception of the Wolverine story and cover, which were excellent), so I hope we resume full pace next issue.

Joey Marchese
Box 2165
Union, NJ 07083

You caught us on the lettering, Joey! Both the Wolverine and Ghost Rider features were actually lettered by Steve Dutro—who will definitely do more work for us (as long as we credit him correctly...)!

Dear Terry,

More Thing! This was a cute story. This is probably an everyday occurrence for the Thing. Reed says "I'm out of Cosmic whatever," and the Thing has to take a ride for it. I'm glad that my days are not like Ben's. Imagine if you had to battle the Department of Motor Vehicle's champion for a driver's license, or the Produce Man for a pound of tomatoes.

Avengers solo stories are abundant, but we need more FF ones!

Steven Centonzo
(Address withheld by request)

Sorry, Steven, but we're not really big tomato fans here. And, since we work in Manhattan, we don't need driver's licenses. So, we can't really empathize with you. But, we will try to get more FF solo stories in these pages!

GHOST RIDER

Sam Kieth — COVER
Terry Kavanagh — EDITOR
Mark Powers — ASSISTANT EDITOR
Tom DeFalco — EDITOR IN CHIEF

pg.

GHOST RIDER/ WEREWOLF 1

RETURN OF THE BRAINEATERS
Part 5 of 6
"ROADKILL"

Hoping to catch the Braineaters off-guard in their human forms, Dan Ketch attempted to infiltrate their ranks at the Black Moon Bar & Grill. Just when he thought he'd found an ally, he was trounced by the other cyclists and left for dead...

Writer — CHRIS COOPER
Penciler — JOHN STANISCI
Inker — JIMMY PALMIOTTI/ KEN BRANCH
Letterer —STEVE DUTRO
Colorist — FRED MENDEZ

THANOS 9

I, THANOS
Part 4 of 4
"BETRAYAL"

Last issue, Mistress Death offered to spend all of eternity with Thanos, if only he would perform one task to prove his love...kill Adam Warlock!

Writer —JIM STARLIN
Artist — SHAWN McMANUS
Letterers — DUTRO/SHARPE
Colorist — JOHN KALISZ

NEXT ISSUE: WOLVERINE CONFRONTS THE RESULT OF A CIA EXPERIMENT GONE AWRY — TYPHOID MARY! THE FINALE OF "RETURN OF THE BRAINEATERS"! FROM THE PAGES OF WARLOCK. . .*PIP THE TROLL. PLUS, HOBGOBLIN BATTLES THE DEMOGOBLIN!*

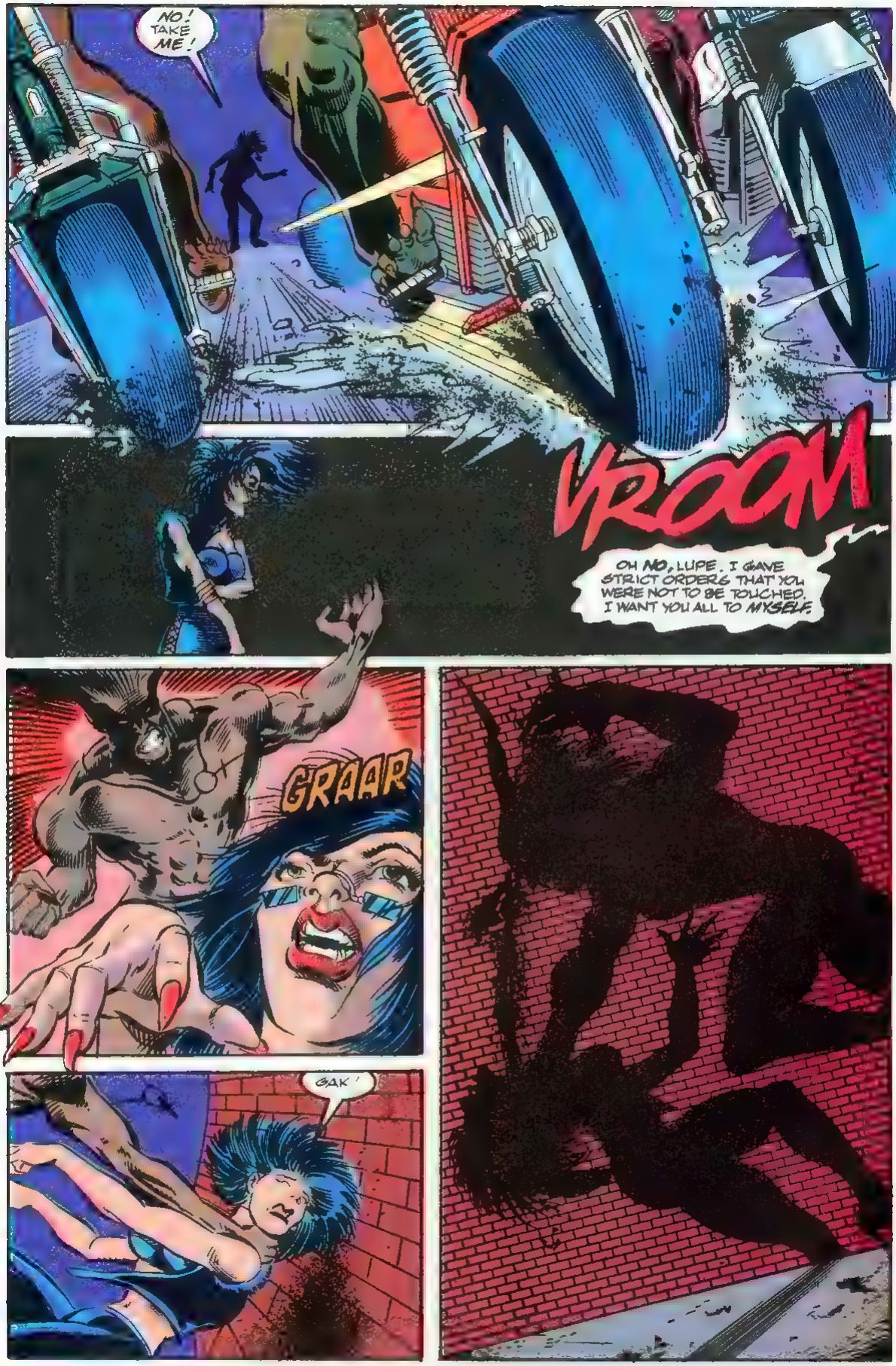
RETURN OF THE BRAINEATERS, PART 5--
ROADKILL!!
IT'S DONE! THE GHOST RIDER IS NO MORE!
TAKE HIM APART, MY BRAINEATERS! FEAST ON HIS BONES, SAMPLE THEIR SUCCULENT MARROW..
.. AND LET THE FALTERING FLAMES OF HIS SKULL LIGHT THE PATH TO OUR VICTIMS! LET HIS DYING EYES FIX ON THE FIERY FACE OF DEATH...
FEATURING
GHOST RIDER
AND
WEREWOLF
THIS STORY TAKES PLACE BEFORE THE EVENTS IN GHOST RIDER #25 -- TH

AND THE HUNGRY FANGS OF THE WOLF!"
NO!
EASY, DAN. THAT MUST'VE BEEN SOME DREAM!
JACK?
WHO ELSE? SORRY TO STARTLE YOU, BUT I CAN BETTER CHECK HOW YOU'RE HEALING WITH WOLF SENSES.
HOW'D I GET HERE? LAST I REMEMBER WAS BEING BEATEN OUTSIDE SOME BAR--
--PRETTY BADLY, TOO. WHEN YOU DIDN'T COME BACK, I TRACKED YOU DOWN, BROUGHT YOU DOWN HERE WHERE THE BRAINS CAN'T GET YOUR SCENT FOR THE STENCH, AND STARTED TREATING YOUR WOUNDS. THAT WAS A FULL DAY AGO.
A DAY--?! BUT I FOUND THE BRAINEATERS, AND THE BOY! WE'VE GOT TO--
YOU'VE GOT TO MEND MORE BEFORE YOU TRY ANY MORE HEROICS. AND BESIDES--
--WE STILL NEED TO PREPARE THE FINAL STAGE OF OUR PLAN...

THE BLACK MOON BAR & GRILL, ELSEWHERE IN BROOKLYN...
THIS KID'S GETTIN' ON MY NERVES.
AW, LEAVE HIM BE SCUZZ. HE AIN'T DOIN NUTHIN
JUST MY POINT, LUPE. HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE OUR HOSTAGE IN CASE THAT GHOST RIDER COMES BACK. WELL, IT'S BEEN DAYS, AND HE AIN'T COME BACK, WHICH MAKES THE KID DEAD WEIGHT--AND I DO MEAN DEAD.
SCUZZ...
SHUT UP, LUPE WE'LL GIVE IT TILL THE END OF THE NIGHT. IF THE GHOST RIDER AIN'T SHOWN UP BY THEN...
...THEN LITTLE BILLY ENDS UP LIKE THAT GUY WE BEAT TO DEATH LAST NIGHT.
THAT GUY LAST NIGHT.
A BRIEF ENCOUNTER. THE SIMPLEST OF WORDS.
"YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS, LUPE...
"I GET THE FEELING YOU'RE LOOKING TO DO BETTER...
"IF SOMEBODY'D JUST SHOW YOU HOW."

RAZORBLADE, DARLIN', IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE WE--
HUH?
Y'KNOW, SINCE WE... GOT TOGETHER.
YOU AND ME. TOGETHER.
LUPE, THAT'S MUSIC TO MY EARS!
THEN MAYBE YOU OUGHTA LISTEN TO THIS...
KPOW
...AIN'T NOBODY MESSES WITH LUPE BUT ME!
HEY! THAT'S MY DRINK
GET OFFA ME YOU--
KILL 'IM! KILL 'IM!
LOUSY FLEA-BITTEN
HURRY KID
"--BEFORE ANYBODY NOTICES WE'RE GONE.
WAIT! STOP FIGHTING!
WHERE'S LUPE? WHERE'S THE KID?!
TO THE BIKES! FIND THEM!

FASTER! BEFORE..
RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
AND WHATEVER YOU DO
DON'T LOOK BACK.
RUN.
BUT..
RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
RRRRUUUUMM


NO! TAKE ME!
VROOM
OH NO, LUPE. I GAVE STRICT ORDERS THAT YOU WERE NOT TO BE TOUCHED. I WANT YOU ALL TO MYSELF.
GRAAR
GAK!

DAN, I REALLY DON'T THINK YOU'VE HEALED ENOUGH FOR--
LOOK! IN THE ALLEY!
LUPE!
DAN? ...THOUGHT YOU WERE.. ANYWAY, GUESS I DON'T LOOK... SO HOT NOW, HUH?
SHHHH... YOU LOOK FINE.
RIGHT. THIS AIN'T WORKIN' OUT... GOTTA.. GOTTA...
HEY, DID I DO BETTER...
MORE THAN BETTER. YOU DID GOOD, LUPE.
REAL GOOD
VENGEANCE!

BLAST IT GHOST RIDER WAIT! WHAT ABOUT THE PLAN--?
WHA--?
YOU WILL PAY FOR YOUR CRIMES SCUZZ.
WHAM
BRKBOW
IN PAIN--
UNGHG!
--AND IN BLOOD!
GO AHEAD THEN AND FINISH ME! BUT IN THE TIME IT TAKES YOU TO DO IT...
...MY BRAINEATERS WILL HAVE STRIPPED THE FLESH FROM THE BOY'S BONES!
WHICH WILL IT BE--KILL ME OR SAVE THE BOY?
CONCLUDES NEXT ISSUE!

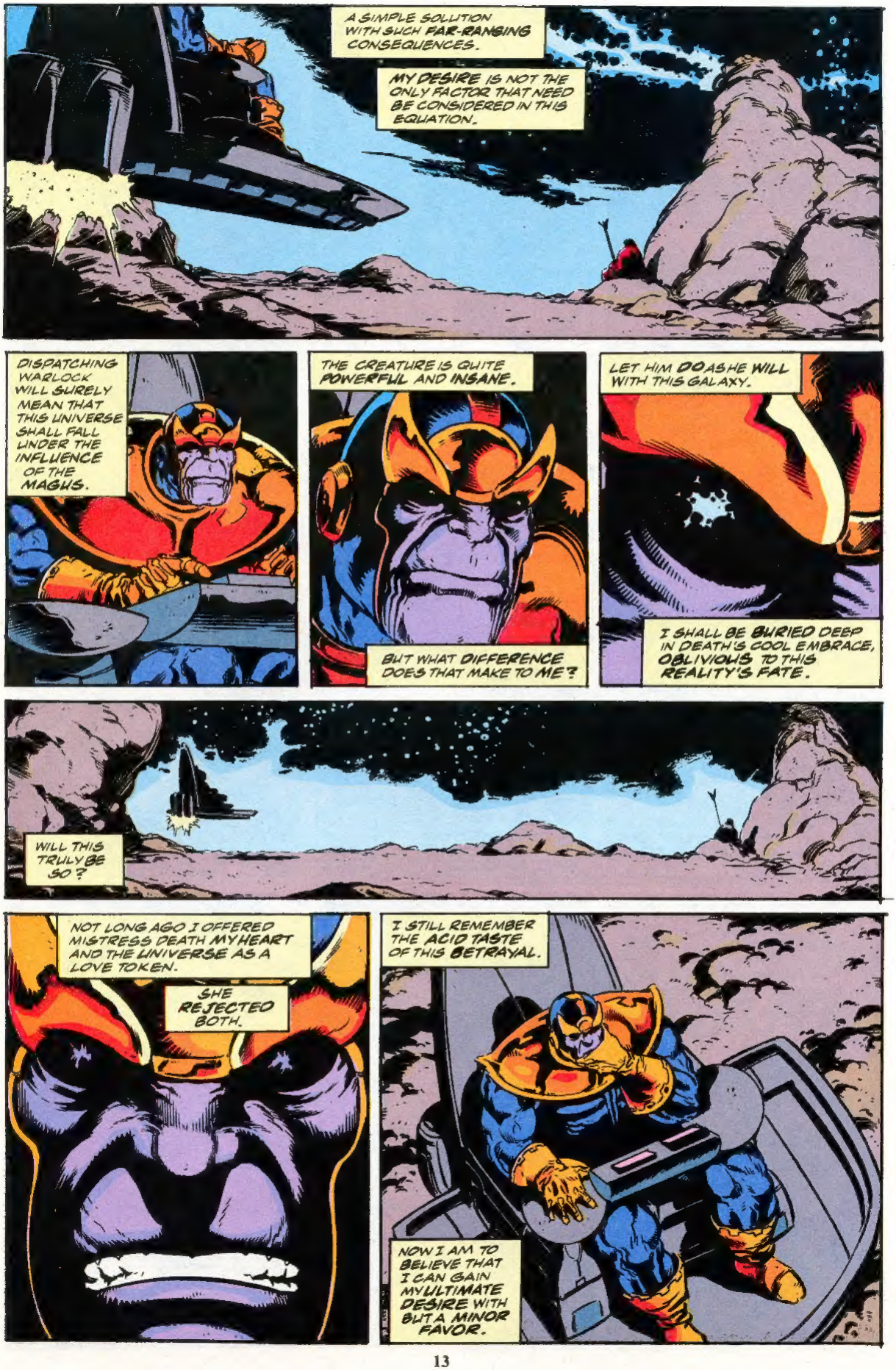
I, THANOS,
CAME TO THIS REALM EXPECTING AN ENDING, INSTEAD I LEAVE WITH A TASK AND A PROMISE FROM MISTRESS DEATH.
SLAY MY TORMENTOR AND I SHALL BE YOUR LOVE UNTIL THE END OF TIME.
"I, THANOS" PART IV "BETRAYAL"
I AM WRENCHED BACK TO REALITY WITH HER SWEET WORDS ECHOING DOWN THE DARK CORRIDERS OF MY SOUL.

MY RETURN TO THE FLESH IS A JARRING AND BITTER EXPERIENCE.
THE SENSES SCREAM IN PROTEST AND MY BIZARRE CIRCUMSTANCES IMMEDIATELY CONFOUND ME.
I HAVE RETURNED TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING TO BRING DEATH TO AN ALLY.

MY TASK IS TO KILL ONE OF THE INFINITY WATCH.
NOT PIP THE TROLL.
OR FIERY GAMORA.
OR BEFUDDLED DRAX THE DESTROYER.
OR BOTHERSOME MOONDRAGON.

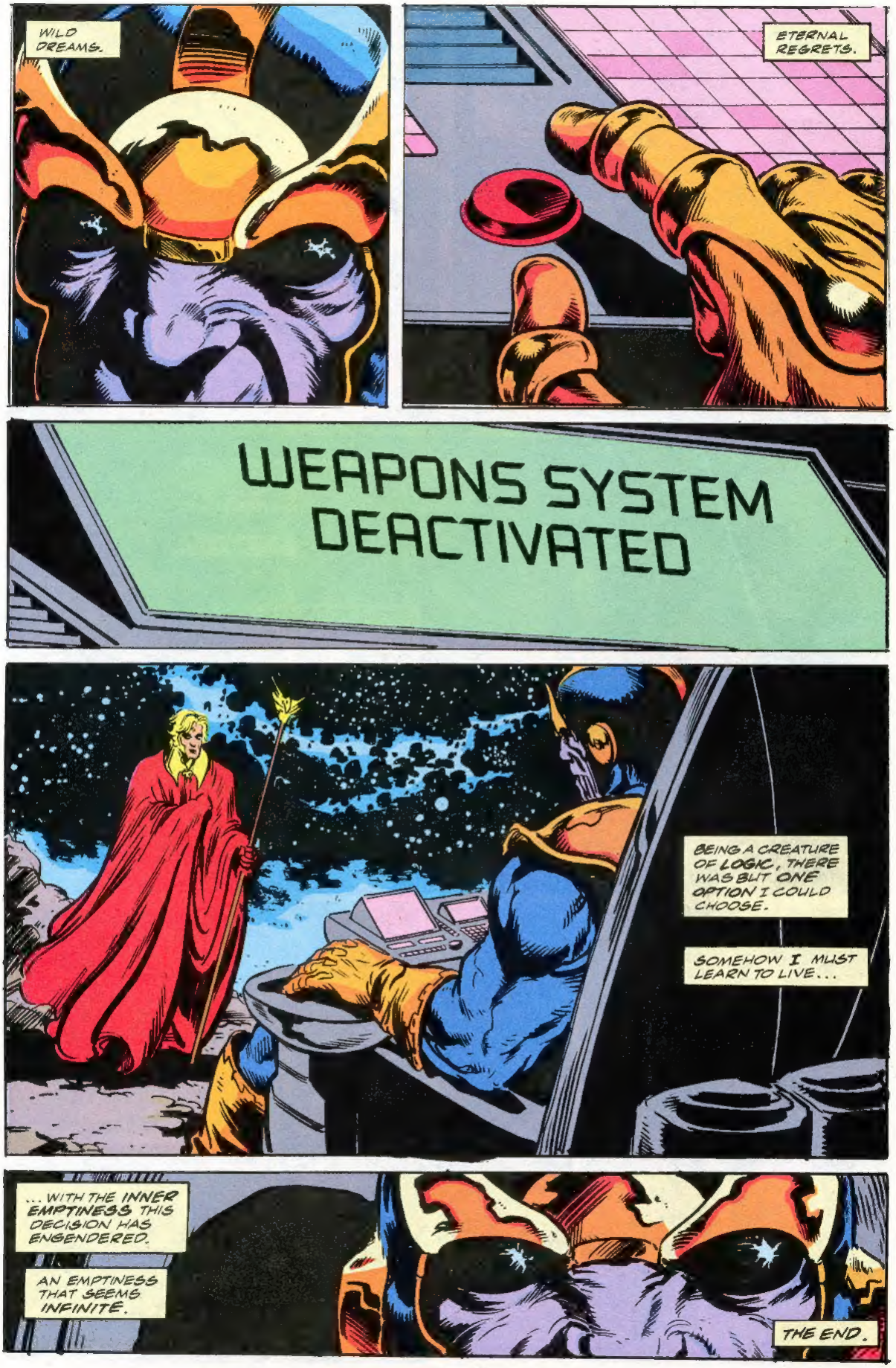
NO, MY TARGET IS THE LEADER OF THE WATCH, ADAM WARLOCK.
HE WHO I CAME TO IN GOOD FAITH, TO ALIGN MYSELF WITH AGAINST THE PERIL OF THE MAGUS.
WARLOCK IS THE ONLY SOUL CAPABLE OF THWARTING THAT POWER-HUNGRY LUNATIC'S DARK SCHEMES.
HE MAY TRULY BE THIS UNIVERSE'S SOLE HOPE FOR SALVATION.
AND I MUST KILL ADAM IN ORDER TO GAIN MISTRESS DEATH'S LOVE.
IT WILL BE AN EXTREMELY EASY GOAL TO ACHIEVE.
WARLOCK HAS NO REASON TO SUSPECT TREACHERY.
HE STILL BELIEVES ME A LOYAL ALLY.

WEAPONS SYSTEM ACTIVATED
AN INCORRECT ASSUMPTION.
TARGETING SEQUENCE INSTITUTED
A FATAL MISCALCULATION.
TARGET IDENTIFIED
THE FRAGILITY OF LIFE.
LOCKED ONTO TARGET
A TOUCH OF A BUTTON AND MY DREAMS CAN ALL COME TRUE.
SO EASY.


A SIMPLE SOLUTION WITH SUCH FAR-RANGING CONSEQUENCES.
MY DESIRE IS NOT THE ONLY FACTOR THAT NEED BE CONSIDERED IN THIS EQUATION.
DISPATCHING WARLOCK WILL SURELY MEAN THAT THIS UNIVERSE SHALL FALL UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE MAGUS.
THE CREATURE IS QUITE POWERFUL AND INSANE.
BUT WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THAT MAKE TO ME?
LET HIM DO AS HE WILL WITH THIS GALAXY.
I SHALL BE BURIED DEEP IN DEATH'S COOL EMBRACE, OBLIVIOUS TO THIS REALITY'S FATE.
WILL THIS TRULY BE SO?
NOT LONG AGO I OFFERED MISTRESS DEATH MY HEART AND THE UNIVERSE AS A LOVE TOKEN.
SHE REJECTED BOTH.
I STILL REMEMBER THE ACID TASTE OF THIS BETRAYAL.
NOW I AM TO BELIEVE THAT I CAN GAIN MY ULTIMATE DESIRE WITH BUT A MINOR FAVOR.

ALL I NEED DO IS VIOLATE MY WORD, MURDER A CONFEDERATE AND DOOM A UNIVERSE.
A TRULY SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR DEATH'S AFFECTION.
NOW I NEED ASK, DO I TRULY TRUST MISTRESS DEATH'S WORD?
IS HER OFFER GENUINE OR DOES SHE BUT TOY WITH ME?
THE COST SHE DEMANDS IS ONE I WOULD GLADLY PAY.
I WOULD FREELY SACRIFICE ALL EXISTENCE FOR HER LOVE.
BUT WILL THE PRICE OF ADMISSION REALLY GAIN ME ENTRY?
OR WILL I FOOLISHLY FIND MYSELF ALONE IN THE COLD WITH MOCKING LAUGHTER RINGING IN MY EARS?
OF COURSE, ALL THIS SOUL SEARCHING IS BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT MY ENCOUNTER WITH MISTRESS DEATH ACTUALLY OCCURRED.
COULD IT BE BUT A FANTASY TRIGGERED BY THE STRESS OF THE MOMENT...
OR BY AN UNDETECTED VIRUS...
...OR EVEN A DESIRE UNFULFILLED?

I POSSESS NO EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE THAT MY RENDEZVOUS WITH MISTRESS DEATH EVER HAPPENED.
BUT THEN AGAIN...
... NEITHER HAVE I PROOF THAT IT DIDN'T OCCUR.
THERE LIES THE DILEMMA.
DO I REACH OUT FOR THE SUBLIME OR SATISFY MYSELF WITH A MORE CAUTIOUS PATH?
THE CHOICE.
I STILL REMEMBER HER SCENT AS SHE BRUSHED AGAINST ME.


WILD DREAMS.
ETERNAL REGRETS.
WEAPONS SYSTEM DEACTIVATED
BEING A CREATURE OF LOGIC, THERE WAS BUT ONE OPTION I COULD CHOOSE.
SOMEHOW I MUST LEARN TO LIVE...
... WITH THE INNER EMPTINESS THIS DECISION HAS ENGENDERED.
AN EMPTINESS THAT SEEMS INFINITE.
THE END.